

"Research-oriented environment/development NGOs, the public sphere and policy in Central and South America."

School of Environment and Development
University of Manchester

Final report

IDRC Grants: 102564-023, 102564-024, 102564-39, 102564-41

Proposing institution:

Institute for Development Policy and Management, School for Environment and Development, University of Manchester, UK

Lead academic:

Professor Anthony Bebbington

Summary:

This learning project combined a specialized course for study fellows who work in research based NGOs concerned with environment and development; individual research projects by study fellows in which they analyze the position and roles of research NGOs in their respective countries; and a collective research project building on these study fellow projects and addressing the roles that research oriented NGOs have played, currently play and might play in strengthening the public spheres in their societies and in informing the policies and strategies of government, civil society and private actors. Conceptually the research developed understanding of the relationships between non-profit knowledge generation and concepts of civil society. Strategically it has already begun to feed into the future plans of the NGOs participating in the course, and there is already evidence that it will contribute to broader understanding and debate via the dissemination of its findings.

Activities

Year 1

During the first year of the project, the main activities were:

- Course design
- Implementation of the month long course in Manchester (June-July, 2005)
- Preparation of case-study research proposals (July-August, 2005)
- Initiation of research

These activities were reported on in the project's mid-term report which is attached here as Annex 1.

Year 2

The principal activities during the second year of the project were as follows.

1. Between May 15th and 19th, 2006 we held the second meeting of the course participants. This was held in San Salvador in the offices of Prisma, who were a wonderful host institution. The meeting had the following purposes:

- to review progress in each of the institutional case studies being conducted by each participant
- to revisit selections of the theoretical material discussed in Manchester with a view to clarifying how to theorize the case studies individually and collectively
- to discuss the case studies comparatively in order to identify cross cutting themes (as well as clear differences)
- to plan the final phases of the project

The meeting was attended by participants from each of the centers with three qualifications:

- a. As noted in the mid-term report, the Protropico participant (Nidia Tec) in the Manchester course left Protropico. In her place Protropico sent two participants (one funded by Protropico themselves): Cynthia Bazán and Adrian López.
- b. Iliana Monterroso of Flacso had to withdraw from the May meeting at the last moment because of health reasons.
- c. CCMSS were unable to find a person to replace Gabriela de la Mora, and so their participation in the project came to an end (though see below)

2. Between June and November, 2006 the group prepared a joint synthesis chapter. As other participants were preoccupied with their respective case studies Bebbington led in the drafting of this, though it was very much a group product drawing on group discussions in El Salvador and Manchester. This synthesis chapter had two purposes. First, it was to serve as the introductory chapter to the book collecting the case studies together. Second, in its English version, it was to be a chapter for the book: *Can NGOs Make A Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives* (A Bebbington, S Hickey, D Mitlin eds., London, Zed Books, 2007 – to be published in December 2007, and launched in Manchester on December 3rd, and in The Hague on December 13th, 2007)

3. Between June 2006 and February 2007 each centre revised, substantially, their case studies. This process involved intensive editorial input from Bebbington and it is fair to say that in most of the cases, by the time the paper reached its final form it had been through four of five revisions. This is an indication of the seriousness with which each centre took the topic as well as – we sense – a reflection of the fact that in many centers, the interest of the centre as a whole (rather than just of the participant) in the research component of the project became progressively greater as the project unfolded.

4. In early 2007 Bebbington and Hinojosa (who had also taught on the course at Manchester and has a background with knowledge generating NGOs in Peru) prepared a concluding chapter for the book on the basis of the near final case studies.

5. During early 2007, with most of the chapters in hand, we negotiated (with Iliana Monterroso's help) with Flacso-Guatemala that the Editorial de Ciencias Sociales would publish a book collecting these chapters together. Flacso was the stated preference of the group at the May 2007 meeting for various reasons: its academic prestige as a press in Central America; its potential regional coverage; and the fact that, with the book in the lists of a regular publisher, its shelf life would be longer and it would be available independent of the project and the project partners.

6. Between March and May 2007 the chapters underwent style and format editing and copy-editing at Manchester. Galleys were proofed by Bebbington in July 2007 and the book was published in August, 2007 as:

Investigación y cambio social: desafíos para las ONG en Centroamérica y México A.Bebbington (ed.), 2007. Guatemala City. Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

7. Beginning in August 2007, a process of dissemination began, discussed more fully below.

Dissemination and diffusion

There are two very broad ambits in which the project's results and reflections have been disseminated: internal to the organizations involved, and externally to broader publics.

Internal dissemination

While it may sound redundant to talk of dissemination within the organizations, this has been a very real task and challenge for the persons involved in the project – for several reasons. In a number of the centers, Ford's insistence at the beginning of the process that centre directors *not* be the people who participate in the course (with one exception, GEA) created a certain resistance to the initiative from directors who it seems, in more than one case, had expected to be their center's participant in the course. Second, the case studies – by their very nature and design – raise a number of critical questions about the centers being analyzed. This has also generated some resistance (not surprisingly) and – we must be frank – some rewriting of the cases in order to tone down certain observations (a point noted in the very last paragraph of the book). These two factors mean that this process has not always been easy for the project participants – perhaps particularly the younger ones who have tended to bring more of a critical social science lens to their own organizations. Of course, the very factors creating these difficulties are those that underlay (I presume) the initial decision by Ford that participants should not be the incumbent directors. The project has, perhaps, helped air these issues a bit more, but it alone certainly cannot resolve them.

This said, all the participants have observed that the process of preparing and then discussing the case studies has generated constructive discussion inside a number of the centers allowing them to think more strategically both about their own governance and leadership practices, as well as about the ways in which they organize and manage their research activities. As reflections of these desires to act on the research, PRISMA requested a day's internal workshop with Bebbington to discuss these issues, and RDS have asked the same.

External dissemination

Latin America

The principal, initial mechanism for dissemination of the project's conclusions and insights to wider audiences will be the book publication and its launch. To date two launches have been completed, each successful.

On August 23rd, 2007 the book was launched by Nitlapán at the UCA-Nicaragua. The event was chaired by Arturo Grigsby and involved presentations by Arturo Grigsby, Jose Luis Rocha, Bebbington and commentary from the representative in Nicaragua of Ayuda Popular Noruega. The event attracted over 110 attendees, and all thirty-five available copies of the book were sold, with others leaving names so that they could buy copies once the remaining copies arrived from Guatemala. Attendees and follow up visitors to Nitlapán included a former ministers and also a former director of the Central Bank of Nicaragua, as well as people from government, academia, NGOs, international cooperation and the press.

On August 24th, 2007 the book was launched by Flacso in Guatemala City. This event, chaired by Isabel Rodas (academic coordinator of Flacso), involved presentations by Bebbington, Ileana Gomez (Prisma), and Iliana Monterroso (Flacso), and comments from Virgilio Reyes, (Coordinator of the Area de Población Ambiente y Desarrollo Rural, Flacso) and Ariel Ortiz (Dean, Universidad San Carlos de Guatemala). The event attracted over 65 people, again drawn across different sectors of society.

Between October 14 and 17th, Bebbington visited RDS in Honduras. This visit had two purposes: firstly, to discuss with the RDS, some of the challenges that the self study had identified, and secondly to launch the book. The launch occurred on October 16th, in an event held at the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. An estimated 150 people attended – many of these were students, but also NGOs, donors and professors. The launch involved presentations by Bebbington, Nelson Cuellar (Prisma), Pedro Torres (RDS) and Jorge Amaya (Universidad Autonoma). The launch was interesting because it seems it was the first time that RDS had engaged with the university in such a way – and it seemed that all round the main parties were pleased with this collaboration.

Launches are also planned by the other participating centers: GEA in November (as part of the celebration of its 30th anniversary), UADY-Protropico in December/January and

Foro at a date still to be defined. Prisma will launch the book in 2008 as part of the celebrations of its 15th anniversary.

In addition to this dissemination, each centre will also have 100 books at their disposal for dissemination – through a combination of sale and targeted gifts. Each centre will devise its own dissemination strategy. It is worth noting that at Nitlapan, by mid October 2007, all 100 books that Nitlapan had received had been sold.

Flacso has also submitted to us the final, clean PDF of the book. This is now available on Nitlapan's websites and RDS's site. RDS has also produced a CD version of the book..

The publication of the book has also re-initiated Manchester's link with CCMSS, and (via the Foundation) a opened a link with a group proposing the creation of a rural studies network in Central America. CCMSS have begun conversing with Bebbington regarding the implications for their desire to assume more of a think tank role, and the devisers of the rural studies network wish to draw on the book's ideas as they prepare their proposal.

Finally the project's findings have fed into discussions in South America. In Peru they have been discussed with various persons and served as an input into a recent evaluation of a leading nongovernmental research centre there. They also served as an important point of reference in the conceptualization of the institutional evaluation of Rimisp-Latin American Centre for Development that Bebbington conducted during 2006.

Europe

The results of the project will also be disseminated in Europe in the following ways:

- copies of the book will be sent to agencies and interested parties
- On July 13th, 2007 Bebbington made a presentation of the studies conclusions to a research team at CARE-International (plus several UK based agencies) that is currently conducting a DfID commissioned study of civil society in Peru, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Brazil
- As noted, the project's synthesis chapter is included in the book *Can NGOs Make A Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives* (A Bebbington, S Hickey, D Mitlin eds., London, Zed Books). This will be published in December 2007, and will be launched at Manchester on December 3rd, 2007 and at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague on December 13th, 2007.

Project products and effects

The projects two main tangible products are of course the book:

Investigación y cambio social: desafíos para las ONG en Centroamérica y México A.Bebbington (ed.), 2007. Guatemala City. Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

and the chapter:

"Producing knowledge, generating alternatives? Challenges to research oriented NGOs in Central America and Mexico" C. Bazán, N. Cuellar, I. Gómez, C. Illsley, I. Monterroso, J. Pardo, J.L. Rocha, P. Torres, A. Bebbington in: A. Bebbington, S. Hickey and D. Mitlin (eds.) Can NGOs Make A Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives. London. Zed Press.

It is still too soon to know what the impacts of these will be though the notes above on dissemination suggest some effects of these publications already, both within participating centers as well as beyond them.

The project has also had a number of other, less tangible, and not always anticipated effects, that also seem important. The most significant of these is to have fostered relationships among the participants of the projects:

- In a few cases there had been some relationship at the beginning of the process, but more have been fostered and have become stronger. These new and strengthened relationships have already fostered interaction and potential research collaborations among Prisma and RDS, Prisma and Flacso, and Flacso and Nitlapan. As another dimension of this process, Iliana Monterroso joined the Consejo del Grupo Chorlavi, as a result of nominations from two other participants in the project.
- Relationships between Manchester and several of the centres have also been established with the hope that they may lay the basis for future collaborations. Specifically, Bebbington was asked to be a member of the Advisory Group for the Prisma led initiative on Dinámicas Territoriales en Centroamérica, and is also beginning a collaboration with them on mining, environment and development, initially in El Salvador (as an initiative linked to his broader research program on Territories, Conflicts and development:
<http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/research/andes/>

Annex 1:
Mid-term report submitted in April 2006

Mid-term report for IDRC Grants: 102564-023, 102564-024, 102564-039, 102564-041

"Research-oriented environment/development NGOs, the public sphere and policy in Central and South America."

Informe de medio termino

Antecedentes

Este proyecto, firmado en mayo 2006, contempla dos componentes: un curso para oficiales de ONG de Mexico y Centro América, y un componente de investigación, basado en las actividades del curso. La primera mitad del proyecto se basa mayormente en el curso, y la segunda mitad en el componente de investigación. Este informe reporta sobre los avances en ambos components.

Avances

El curso se llevó a cabo entre el 14 de junio y el 15 de julio, en la Universidad de Manchester, Inglaterra. Participaron las siguientes personas:

Nidia Tec Chan, UADY, Mexico
Gabriela de la Mora, CCMSS, Mexico
Cati Illsley, GEA, Mexico
Joaline Pardo, Foro, Mexico
Jose Luis Rocha, Nitlapan, Nicaragua
Iliana Monterrosa, FLACSO, Guatemala
Nelson Cuellar, PRISMA, El Salvador
Ileana Gomez, PRISMA, El Salvador (financiado por Prisma)
Pedro Torres, RDS, Honduras (financiado por IDRC)

El curso fue organizado por Prof. Anthony Bebbington, y participaron un grupo de profesores de la Universidad de Manchester. Tambien se incorporaron visitas a centros de investigación en Inglaterra, y invitamos personas de organizaciones en Holanda (ISS y Icco) para que conversen con los participantes del curso. El syllabus para el curso esta en el Anexo A a este informe.

Otro componente del curso fue la participación de los estudiantes en una conferencia internacional sobre ONG que se llevo a cabo en la Universidad entre el 27 y el 29 de junio. Los estudiantes se encargaron de un panel en la conferencia cuyo tema fue el rol de, y los desafíos que enfrentan, las ONG de investigación en América Latina. Una participante en el curso también participó en el panel de clausura de la conferencia. La conferencia también permitió que los estudiantes interactúen con otros investigadores – aquí se destaca una sesión con Evelina Dagnino de la UNICAMP.

Se creó una pagina web para el curso. Para acceder se va a la pagina:

<http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/research/events/papers/>

U/N:bebbington

P/W:EvEnT0516

Después del curso, los participantes prepararon una evaluación, que se encuentra en el Anexo B.

Al finalizar el curso, los estudiantes prepararon pequeñas propuestas de investigación para hacer sistematizaciones de las trayectorias de sus propias organizaciones. Después del curso, volvieron a sus organizaciones para empezar estas sistematizaciones. Las sistematizaciones constituyen el punto de contacto entre el componente curso, el componente investigación, y las preocupaciones más estratégicas de sus organizaciones. Se prevén sistematizaciones que siguen la siguiente estructura:

- Una primera sección donde se discute como su centro se entiende como actor social dentro de sus respectivos países/regiones. Parte de esta discusión podría ser conceptual, quizás utilizando materia discutido en el curso (sobre ONG, sociedad civil, movimientos sociales, redes de producción de conocimiento, la economía política del desarrollo rural en Mesoamerica, etc.) además de otros materiales. Esta sección también podría reflexionar sobre el tipo de proyecto socio-política que subyace la producción de conocimiento en sus organizaciones, y los tipos de relación con otros actores que sus centros han privilegiado en el proceso de seguir este proyecto.
- Una segunda sección, más empírica, algo como una sistematización de la experiencia de sus centros. Como empezaron, como han evolucionado, porque privilegiaron la producción de conocimiento como un instrumento central en sus proyectos socio-políticos, como han utilizado este conocimiento en estos proyectos ... Aquí se discutirán los desafíos, las amenazas, las oportunidades, las relaciones, etc. que han influido en esta evolución – estos desafíos pueden ser tanto externos como internos a sus centros. También se discutirá como sus centros han podido responder a estos contextos, y si en el proceso ha sido posible sostener los proyectos socio-políticos.

En esta sección se discutirán las experiencias, ideas, luchas, logros etc. concretas de sus organizaciones en los distintos ámbitos en los cuales trabajan. Aquí se usará la mayor parte de la materia prima que los estudiantes han podido generar y movilizar en base a sus discusiones internas, entrevistas, talleres, revisiones de documentación etc.

- Una tercera sección que es más prospectiva. Con esta evolución e historia en mente, hacia donde van (y hacia donde quieren ir). Otra vez esta reflexión puede ser tanto conceptual y abstracto como empírico y específico. Como quieren entenderse en el futuro, en términos de sus roles en sus sociedades? Cuales

relaciones serán las más importantes, cuales serán sus fuentes de legitimidad ...? Cual será el proyecto socio-político y como lo buscarán. Como mantendrán la capacidad de seguir produciendo conocimientos consistentes con este proyecto? Cuales son las amenazas y oportunidades que les esperan y como los van a enfrentar?

Al final de la reunión en Manchester, se acordó volver a reunirnos en febrero, 2006, en El Salvador, para el segundo componente del curso lo cual se basaría sobre todo en los avances de cada uno en sus sistematizaciones. Sin embargo, en noviembre todos los miembros del grupo comentaron que no tendrían avances significativos para esa fecha, sobre todo porque al volver a sus organizaciones en julio habían encontrado cargas importantes de trabajo. Se decidió postergar la segunda reunión hasta mayo, 2006.

Uno de los efectos del curso fue que los participantes lograron conocerse mejor y se formaron como un grupo, uno de los objetivos subyacentes de esta iniciativa. Es muy temprano saber si esto llevará a otras iniciativas, aunque como un indicio temprano vale notar que dos miembros del grupo han nombrado a otro miembro como posible miembro nuevo del Consejo del Grupo Chorlavi (aún falta una decisión del Consejo).

Próximos pasos

Este segundo componente del curso se llevará a cabo entre el 14 y el 20 de mayo, en las oficinas de Prisma en San Salvador. Al momento de escribir, los preparativos están en curso. El 14 de abril, los estudiantes entregarán avances de sus trabajos al coordinador (Bebbington), y él les mandará observaciones/sugerencias dentro de una semana. Luego de una revisión, el 5 de mayo, cada uno mandará su borrador a todos los miembros del grupo. Durante esa semana, se trabajará sobre estos avances, los temas emergentes y las implicaciones para sus organizaciones.

Después de mayo, el calendario para las siguientes actividades es lo siguiente:

- Junio-Septiembre – intercambios entre todos, y entre uds y yo, sobre sus trabajos, las ideas que están saliendo en el proceso de revisar y terminar los documentos, como presentarlos etc.
- Septiembre 15 – versión final de los estudios.
- Oct-Nov – preparación del texto del libro.
- Dic – comentarios sobre síntesis, y revisión final
- Dic 2006/Enero 2007 – producción del libro

El libro que se prevé recogerá las sistematizaciones de los casos, las ubicarán en un contexto analítico más amplio y sacará lecciones transversales sobre los roles, desafíos y futuro de las ONG de investigación en la región. La idea es que este libro sea de utilidad

dentro de las organizaciones, en cursos que enseñan sobre el tema de ONG y desarrollo, y quizá sobre todo, para educar a las agencias financieras.

Cambios

El proyecto ha avanzado más o menos de una manera consecuente con la propuesta inicial. Sin embargo, vale notar dos cambios.

1. Cambio de participantes. A finales de 2005, Gabriela de la Mora salió del CCMSS en Mexico. Dado que en este momento no hubo un oficial de programas para el proyecto no se supo como proceder con el Consejo. En este momento se esta discutiendo con el Director, Sergio Madrid la posibilidad de que otro miembro del CCMSS participe en la reunión pero sin un avance de investigación. En febrero 2006, Nidia Tec Chan informó que había salido de UADY, aunque sigue apoyando la sistematización. Cynthia Bazán Godoy de UADY-PROTROPICA participará en la reunión.

2. En la propuesta se anticipó un componente de la investigación sobre ONG de investigación en Perú, como punto de comparación con el caso de Centroamérica y México. Sin embargo, en marzo 2006, el ex-oficial de programa para el proyecto sugirió que sería preferible cambiar esto, y más bien enfocar el tiempo del coordinador en apoyar a los casos con análisis de contexto (además que el análisis de contenidos, ya previsto). Se concretará esto durante la reunión de mayo.

Anexo A

Research oriented environment/development NGOs, the public sphere and policy change in Central and South America: a short course

Final Report for IDRC Grants: 102564-023 and 102564-024

**IDPM, University of Manchester
June 15-July 14, 2005**

**Academic convenor: Prof. A Bebbington
Course coordinator: Denise Humphreys Bebbington
Course administrator: Marta Fole**

Rooms:

Room 9.23 from June 15 to 24th

Room from June 27-July 1st

Room 9.23 from July 4th to end of course

Concept

The course is predicated on the belief that private, non-profit research and policy analysis organizations have a critical role to play in their societies. In particular they contribute to: the quality of public debate; the production of knowledge for sustainable development; the accountability of government and private sector institutions (through the provision of empirically based information); the strength of civil society (through the provision of knowledge and ideas that foster reflection and are inputs into rethinking national development strategies); and the overall health of the public sphere both in their own countries and at a more international level. This role is all the more important given that much knowledge on Central America is externally generated, and does not necessarily reflect (all) national views on what constitute either priority research issues or even appropriate interpretations of available data. This is certainly the case in the field of environment and development, where much information generated privileges scientific over social scientific knowledge, and is infrequently oriented to laying the empirical bases for conceiving alternative strategies.

The proposal grows out of a conviction that such organizations face particular pressures and challenges to their survival, and that these pressures have increased over the past decade. Perhaps most important has been the increasing scarcity of funding for medium to long term socio-economic research in the Central (and in indeed South) America as traditional sources of support for such work have either decided that the development pay-offs to research are too intangible or too few, and/or have simply reduced their support to Latin America on the grounds that these are now largely middle-income countries. Such changes have tended to push such institutes towards the implementation of projects and a focus on shorter term, consultancy based research that, moreover, tends

to be framed by and functional to their funding agencies rather than conceived on the basis of public debate and researcher insight into themes that merit research. Such short term, more focused work is clearly of value, but it tends to produce knowledge related to solving specific problems rather than forms of knowledge that raise more general issues for policy and development strategy.

Funding flows to research institutes have been reduced on other grounds too. The argument that their work is insufficiently relevant either to public policy or to the strategic concerns of social movements and popular organizations has influenced thinking in some agencies, and has also been used by those already intent on reducing support to research. More generally, many worry about their effectiveness in feeding research into public debate – to disseminate research and to make it digestible. If these are already problems within Central America, they become even more so at an international level where actors outside the region (but who have great influence over it) pay little or no attention to the research emerging from these institutes. Even if some of these critiques are at times overstated, nonprofit research institutes clearly have difficulty in elaborating effective mechanisms of dissemination and *incidencia* among a range of other actors.

In addition to these structural problems, such NGOs also face more specific problems: how to provide an environment in which researchers can thrive; how to help young researchers grow in ability and stature; how to manage research in a way that ensures the financial health of the institution but also the intellectual creativity of its researchers; how to establish financial management systems that enable funding of additional intellectual activities not always funded in research contracts; how to take bureaucratic pressure off researchers so that they are indeed able to research; how to maneuver between, and select from, global debates on their area of substantive and policy interest, and the national and local contexts in which they address these issues; and how to contribute to global debates.

The pressures and challenges outlined in the previous paragraphs threaten to weaken research based NGOs. Indeed, many have already been weakened significantly. As just one example, the Peruvian research institute Desco was one of the leading sources of critical research on development in Peru, yet by 2001 it had only two part time researchers (the remainder of its staff were involved in projects). And yet, notwithstanding such precipitous declines in capacity, research institutes in the Andean countries are still in a better position than those in Central America. These latter have been severely constrained by regional violence and the chronic weakening of universities in the region (with the consequent lack of new generations of researchers). Just two recent measures of the particular weakness of such institutions in Central America are the following:

- Over the past 4 years Central America has been seriously underrepresented among the organizations that have both bid for and won research and writing grants from the various programs of the Grupo Chorravi (all of which have had some overlap with environment and development)

- In a recent call for proposals on social movements, environmental governance and territorial rural development by RIMISP, not one proposal from Central America was successful.¹

Though these are just two indicators, they suggest the special challenges facing Central American environment and development research centers. The training course and linked research that we propose will explore the nature and origins of these different challenges, and strategies that different types of research entities not only in Latin America but also around the world have adopted to address them. The course will place heavy emphasis on the use of case studies to address such issues, while also engaging in theoretical and conceptual debates as appropriate. Finally, given the thematic concerns of the research NGOs attending (environment, development, governance of natural resources, social justice and environment) the course will also include modules of contemporary research themes in nature-society, environment and development.

Course purpose

In this context the purpose of the activities proposed here is to contribute to the capacities of Central American research NGOs. It will do this in four separate ways:

- Providing training on current trends, debates and themes in research on environment and development
- Providing knowledge and insight into systems that have been used in the management of non-profit research activities
- Exposing participants to the management, organizational, research, dissemination and *incidencia* strategies of a number of European non-profit research institutes that have succeeded in sustaining themselves and sustaining their presence in and influence over policy debates
- Generating new knowledge that will locate Latin American research institutions in the political economic and societal contexts in which they operate, will explore institutes' approaches to research management and policy, and will lay the bases for elaborating institutional strategies in the near future

The proposal is for two linked activities: a training course, and a linked research program. Each is now discussed in turn.

Course content

The course will combine seminar based learning at Manchester with study tours to organizations concerned with environment and development research in the UK and the Netherlands. This will be organized around one residential period in Manchester lasting four weeks. The course will also involve participants in research on the position of research NGOs within their societies, as part of a broader project on the relationships

¹ Of the 7 successful proposals, three were from the Andes, three from Brazil and one from Mexico.

between research NGOs, civil society and the public sphere. Participants will conduct this research over a 6 month period following the residential course in Manchester. There will then be a second residential period, this time in Central America, to review, discuss and suggest modifications to the results of these research projects. The projects will then be revised over the following two months, and then collected together for publication.

Course schedule

The day by day schedule is below. Unless otherwise noted, AM times are 10am to 1pm, and PM times are 2 to 5pm.

June 15th

A.M. A Bebbington: *Introduction: knowledge, NGOs, research and policy*

This session introduces and discusses core themes that will run through the course. These include: the current pressures on and place of NGOs in Latin America, in particular research based NGOs; the place of research based NGOs and think tanks in affecting policies, broader social processes and construction of a public sphere; the concepts of research networks and epistemic communities; and the relationships between power, research, knowledge and policy.

Readings

1. D. Stone 2000 "Non-governmental policy transfer: the strategies of independent policy institutes" *Governance: an international journal of policy and administration* 13(1): 45-62
2. D. Stone 2002 "Using knowledge: the dilemmas of „bridging research and policy”" *Compare* 32(3): 285-296
3. A. Bebbington 2005 "Donor-NGO relations and representations of livelihood in nongovernmental aid chains" *World Development* 33(6): 937-950
4. F. Aldaba, P. Antezana, M. Valderrama and A. Fowler 2000 "NGO strategies beyond aid: perspectives from Central and South America and the Philippines" *Third World Quarterly* 21(4): 669-683
5. Keeley J. and Scoones, I 2003 *Understanding environmental policy processes*. London. ITDG. (chapters 1 and 2)

P.M. L. Hinojosa Valencia: *Analyzing the political economic context of research NGOs*

This session addresses elements of the political economic context within which research NGOs in the region are operating. These elements of context are addressed for both regional (Latin America) and global levels. Their implications for research based NGOs will be elaborated.

1. E. Mawdsley et.al. (2002). NGOs and the „Knowledge Economy’, en *Knowledge, Power and Development Agendas*, INTRAC, Oxford, p. 4-26
2. Discurso J.L. Machinea (CEPAL). *Seminario Mesa Redonda CEPAL-FMI. La Creación de prosperidad en América Latina y El Caribe: Prioridades en el ámbito de las reformas y la macroeconomía*. Santiago, 30 Mayo 2005.
3. Discurso R. de Rato (FMI). *Seminario Mesa Redonda CEPAL-FMI. La Creación de prosperidad en América Latina y El Caribe: Prioridades en el ámbito de las reformas y la macroeconomía*. Santiago, 30 Mayo 2005.
4. BID (2004). Presentación, en *Los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio en América Latina y El Caribe*, Washington D.C., p. v-vi.
 - 4.a (opcional). BID. Antecedentes e implicancias generales para la Región y el Banco, en *Los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio en América Latina y El Caribe*, Washington D.C., p. 8-18
 - 4.b (opcional). BID. Asegurar la sostenibilidad ambiental, en *Los objetivos de desarrollo del Milenio en América Latina y El Caribe*, Washington D.C., p. 172-197
5. Oxfam Intermon (2004). La crisis enterrada. Estudios 14.
6. Oxfam Internacional (2005). Resumen, en *Echar la puerta abajo*, Informe 72, p.2-7
7. Oxfam Internacional (2005). Resumen, en *El arroz se quemó en el DR-CAFTA*, Informe 68, p. 2-5
8. Ford Foundation (2005). Executive Summary, en *Part of the Solution: Leveraging Business and Markets for Low-Income People*, www.fordfound.org, p. 4-9

Reception, 5pm in IDPM cafe

June 16th

AM (10-12 noon) Dr. Diana Mitlin, IDPM and IIED. *The social origins of civil society and (research based) NGOs*

Departing from the framework presented in the reading (which comes from one of the largest comparative studies of civil society), this session explores different ways of conceptualizing the social origins of civil society and the relationships between research oriented NGOs, the state and society. The adequacy of different models will be explored, and tested against the situations of the study fellows’ own NGOs. The session will reflect on the usefulness of these different models for thinking about the relationships between research and policy processes.

Reading

L. Salamon and H. Anheier 1998 “Social origins of civil society: explaining the nonprofit sector cross-nationally” *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 9(3): 213-248

PM (2-4 pm) Prof. Noel Castree, Geography, University of Manchester: *Theoretical and epistemological issues in research on the environment*

This session – the most theoretical of the course – will discuss serious theoretical and epistemological issues at stake in conducting research on the environment, and in conceptualizing the environment and its relationships with society. It will also explore the implications of these for questions of “relevance” in research.

Readings

N. Castree 2003 “Environmental issues: relational ontologies and hybrid politics” *Progress in Human Geography* 27(2): 203-211

N. Castree 2002 “Environmental issues: from policy to political economy” *Progress in Human Geography* 26(3): 357-365

PM (4-6pm) Dr. Gavin Bridge, Geography, University of Manchester and Syracuse University, USA

This session is the first of several to explore current issues in environment-development research. The session discusses emerging themes related to resource extraction, and in particular minerals extraction – an issue of growing significance in the current political economy of Latin America and one that remains under-researched. The session also offers the chance to discuss the ways in which US based federal research funding (which has supported most of Dr. Bridge’s work to date) influences the possibilities for partnerships with Latin American research NGOs.

Readings

Ross M. 2001. *Extractive sectors and the poor*. Boston/Washington: Oxfam America.

Davis GA-, Tilton JE-. 2002. Should developing countries renounce mining? A perspective on the debate. *International Council on Mining and Metals*.

Bridge, G. 2004. Contested Terrain: Mining and the Environment. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 29: 205-59.

June 17th

AM

Dr. Sam Hickey, IDPM University of Manchester. The relationships between (research based) NGOs and civil society

This session explores different understandings of civil society as a basis for conceptualizing the place of NGOs – and in particular research oriented NGOs – in civil society. Again the adequacy of different models will be explored, and tested against the situations of the study fellows' own NGOs. In addition the session will reflect on the usefulness of these different models for thinking about the relationships between research, the creation of the public sphere, and processes of social mobilization.

Readings

J. Howell and J. Pearce 2001 *Civil Society and Development: a critical exploration*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. (chapter 4, "Civil Society, the State and Market).

A Bebbington and S. Hickey 2005 "NGOs and civil society" in D.A. Clark (ed.) *The Elgar Companion to Development Studies*. Cheltenham. Edward Elgar

A. Fowler 2000 "NGO futures: beyond aid: NGDO values and the fourth position" *Third World Quarterly* 21(4): 589-603

A. Fowler 2000 "NGDOs as a moment in history: beyond aid to social entrepreneurship or civic innovation" *Third World Quarterly* 21(4): 637-654

PM *Dr. Uma Kothari: a (radical) walking tour of Manchester*

This walking tour of Manchester is partly intended to familiarize study fellows with the city. However, it also raises issues about the relationships between political economy, urban landscapes and the urban environment.

June 20th

A.M. (10 am – 12 noon) *Dr. Diana Mitlin, IDPM and IIED. Financial management strategies for research based NGOs*

This session explores different options facing research oriented NGOs as they build strategies that will both finance research and generate sufficient revenue to sustain their organization. Issues in handling pure, applied and consultancy research funding will be discussed, and the trade-offs and opportunities of different strategies will be explored. The session will lay out an exercise on which study fellows will work and then report back later in the course.

Reading

A. Fowler 1997 *Striking a Balance: A Guide to Enhancing the Effectiveness of NGOs in International Development*. London : Earthscan. Pp 129-160

P.M. Denise Humphreys Bebbington: Dealing with Foundations

This session discusses strategies for approaching, understanding and building relationships with Foundations that fund NGOs with interests in research, environment and development. It also discusses different ways in which the foundation world – and actors within it – organize themselves and interact to exchange ideas and information. Certain emerging themes in this foundation world are discussed.

Readings

Consult and appraise a Foundation website. Possible Foundations include:

Ford Foundation

IDRC-Canada

Rockefeller Foundation

Mott Foundation

InterAmerican Foundation

Packard Foundation

Hewlett Foundation

PM Panel discussion: participation in research and the relationships between NGOs and citizens organizations in the research process. A panel discussion with S Hickey, D. Mitlin, D. Humphreys Bebbington and A Bebbington

This panel will discuss issues surrounding questions of participation in research and the difficult relationships that can emerge among NGOs, social movements and citizens organizations more generally in the research process. The panel will be interactive with study fellows and will also serve to identify core issues to address with institutions with whom fellows will interact later in the course.

June 21st

AM (10.30 am to 1pm) New Economics Foundation

Reading:

www.neweconomics.org

June 22nd 9am - 4pm. ODI: bridging policy and research, tentative agenda

See Annex A for details on the day

Reading

A. Pollard and J. McCourt. 2005. *How civil society organizations use evidence to influence policy processes*. London. ODI (available at: <http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/research/events/ngo2005/documents/Pollard.pdf>)

June 23rd

A.M. Dr. Dan Brockington: Conservation and Indigenous People.

We will look at the origins of the alliance between indigenous peoples and conservation in Africa, Latin America, North America (and India?) and the conservation policies and practices that it resulted in. We will review the recent cooling of relations and the polemical debate in World Watch initiated by Mac Chapin. Finally we will examine some of the practical consequences of identity politics which are driven by indigeneity, focussing on the exclusion the concept of indigenous necessarily, but unintentionally, effects.

Readings

C. Romero and G. Andrade 2004 “International conservation organizations and the fate of local tropical forest conservation initiatives” *Conservation Biology* 18(2): 578-580

Letters: responses to Romero and Andrade, *Conservation Biology* 18(6): 1452-1455

P.M. Dr. Dan Brockington: Conservation and Poverty.

Recent years have been replete with divergent opinions about the role of conservation in poverty alleviation. Some argue they belong to separate realms, others that conservation causes poverty and should deal with it, others that conservation can ease wealth creation. We will review this debate, and some of its livelier contributions and then turn to the practices which have inspired it. Specifically we will examine the performance of community-based conservation schemes in Africa (especially Zimbabwe) and Integrated Conservation with Development Projects in Indonesia.

Readings

W. Adams et al. 2004 “Biodiversity conservation and the eradication of poverty” *Science* 306: 1146-1149

“Contested relationships between biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation” *Oryx* 37(4): 1-2

D. Brockington 2004 “The social and environmental impacts of wilderness and development” *Oryx* 38(2)1-3

PM (4- 6pm) A Bebbington: Contemporary issues in livelihoods thinking

Complementing Dan Brockington's sessions, this session will explore – briefly – the emergence of livelihoods approaches in research on environment and development, the ways in which they are used, their strengths and weaknesses and possible future trends.

Readings

A. Bebbington 1999 "Capitals and capabilities: a framework for analysing peasant viability, rural livelihoods and poverty." *World Development* Vol. 27(12); 2021-2044.

Banco Mundial 2005 "La contribución de la economía rural al desarrollo: síntesis de los resultados y de las implicaciones para las políticas públicas" from *Más allá de la ciudad*.

June 24th

A.M. Dr. Dan Brockington: The Social Impacts of Protected Areas.

The extent of protected areas globally has tripled in recent decades such that they now cover more than 10% of the land surface of the planet. This great achievement for conservation has not been matched by a concomitant concern for the social impacts of this expansion. This is worrying given we know that there are problematic consequences of exclusion in many cases. We will review the literature on displacement from protected areas, as well as some of their more beneficial impacts. We will then examine in detail practices in South Africa, where innovative conservation arrangements are being pursued that are in many ways years ahead of their time.

Readings

K. Schmidt-Soltau 2003 "Conservation-related resettlement in Central Africa: environmental and social risks" *Development and Change* 34(3): 525-551

C. Geisler and R. de Sousa 2001 "From refuge to refugee: the African case" *Public Administration and Development* 21: 159-170

C. Geisler 2003 "A new kind of trouble: evictions in Eden" *International Social Science Journal*, March 2003, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 69-78

P.M. (2-4pm) J. Gledhill: NGOs, rights and social movements in Mexico and Central America

This session draws on Professor Gledhill's three decades of work in Mexico which has involved close interactions with social movements and social organizations in Mexico. In particular it explores the shifting place of NGOs in the region and the significance of

debates around rights for the ways in which NGOs interact with citizens and the work that they do.

Reading

M. Molyneux and S. Lazar 2003 *Doing the rights thing: rights based development and Latin American NGOs*. London. ITDG. (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 7)

June 27th – June 29th, 2005

The main activity on these days is to participate in the conference entitled “Reclaiming development: Assessing the contributions of NGOs to development alternatives.” However, on each day of the conference there is also a specific activity with one or more of the conference participants.

Readings

M. Edwards and D. Hulme, 1996 “Too close for comfort: the impact of official aid on nongovernmental organizations” *World Development*. 24(6): 961-973

D. Mitlin, S. Hickey and A. Bebbington, conference background paper, available on conference website: <http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/research/events/ngo2005/>

L. Landim 2002 “Multiplas identidades das ONGs” en ABONG (ed.) *ONGs e universidades: desafios a cooperacão nã America Latina*. ABONG-ALOP. Sao Paulo.

A. Bebbington 2002 “Reflexiones sobre la relacion Norte-Sur en la construccion de conocimientos sobre las ONG en America Latina” en ABONG (ed.) *ONGs e universidades: desafios a cooperacão nã America Latina*. ABONG-ALOP. Sao Paulo.

June 27th

PM-afternoon *Discussion with Professor Jude Howell: NGO research in the UK*

Professor Howell, of the Centre for Civil Society at the LSE, is currently Programme Director for a national programme of research being commissioned by the UK’s Economic and Social Research Council and dealing with “Nongovernmental Public Action” (the reading for this discussion defines the scope of this programme). As such she has a privileged overview of the research issues that people in the UK are thinking of at present.

Reading: ESRC, 2004. *Programme Specification: Non-governmental public action*.

PM-evening (6-7.30pm)

Dr. Kees Biekart, ISS, The Hague: NGOs and civil society in Central America

This discussion will address the changing place of NGOs in Central American civil society, as well as their shifting relationships with European (especially Dutch) donors. The role of NGO research in consolidating civil society will also be discussed, drawing on Biekart's recent research and advisory work – above all in Nicaragua, but also for ALOP.

Reading

K. Biekart and A. Morales 2001 *The contribution of the Dutch Cofinancing Agencies to civil society building in Nicaragua*. Ede. Stuurgroep. (Introduction and conclusions)

June 29th

P.M. Prof. Evelina Dagnino, UNICAMP, Brazil. NGOs, social movements and civil society

This session will discuss in more depth issues raised by Professor Dagnino in her plenary address at the NGO conference. It draws on her recent research programme on civil society in Brazil, supported by the Ford Foundation.

June 30th

A.M. Pim Verhallen, Director of Policy, Icco, Netherlands: A co-financing agency view on the role of research NGOs

This session will discuss views among nongovernmental funding organizations, especially in the Netherlands, regarding the role and capacities of NGO research institutes, and ways in which they may be supported within a broader programme concerned with poverty reduction and civil society strengthening. It will also discuss the pressures that agencies such as Icco face in making the case for supporting research. This session will draw on Pim Verhallen's long experience in Latin America.

Reading:

K. Biekart 2003 *Dutch cofinancing agencies and civil society building*. Ede. Stuuregroep. (pages 7-29)

P.M. (2-3.30 pm) Professor David Hulme, IDPM, Manchester University: North-South and NGO-universities research consortia: a case study

This session will discuss the Chronic Poverty Research Centre as an example of an international research partnership combining Northern and Southern Universities, and Northern and Southern NGOs. It will reflect on issues, tensions and possibilities that arise in such partnerships and the challenges of making them work from the perspective

of different members of the partnership. The CPRC is one of DfID's current most high profile research consortia and hence the lessons from this case are of particular resonance.

Reading

www.cprc.org

CPRC 2004 *Chronic Poverty Report*. Manchester/London. CPRC.

P.M. (4-6pm) Leonith Hinojosa-Valencia, IDPM, Manchester University: Case studies of research NGOs in Peru

This session will focus on a case study of a research institute – the Centro Bartolomé de las Casas – in Cusco Peru, and its relationships to other actors in particular other NGOs in Cusco with whom it joined in a regional NGO network called Coincide. CBC is a case of a research NGO that was once very strong – combining research and post-graduate training – but has since become a lot weaker. The case study draws lessons from this experience for managing and positioning research NGO, in particular those located outside the capital city.

July 1st

A.M. Dr. Chris Rees, IDPM, Manchester University. Exploring organisational culture as a component of organisation development (OD) initiatives.

Initially, the session will seek to introduce delegates to current thinking in the field of organisation development, as it relates to the non-profit sector. The session will then focus on various approaches to understanding and influencing organisational culture as part of OD intervention strategies. The session is designed to provide a general context for later sessions of the programme that focus on specific organisational issues.

Readings

- 1) Granell, E. (2000) Culture and Globalisation: a Latin American Challenge. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 32(3): 89-93
- 2) Kendra, K. & Taplin, L. (2004) Project success: a cultural framework. *Project Management Journal*, 35(1): 30-45
- 3) Lewis, D. (2002) Organization and Management in the Third Sector: Towards a Cross-Cultural Research Agenda. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 13(1): 67-83

P.M. (2-4 pm) Dr. Philip Woodhouse, Director IDPM, University of Manchester: A case study of a development studies research institute.

This session addresses another case study, that of IDPM itself. IDPM is now a department within the University of Manchester, but in the past has been more akin to an NGO existing within the structure of the university and combining postgraduate teaching and research. The Institute has a mission to contribute to social and economic development, but is also under pressure to perform according to the research standards and cultures of mainstream academic departments. This session discusses the research and staff management challenges raised by this case from the perspective of the person having to manage them.

Readings

Explore IDPM website. <http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/>

PM (4-5.30 pm) Prof. Anthony Bebbington.

This session will begin discussion of the research projects that study fellows will work on after the course, and lay out an exercise on which to work over the following week and report back on between July 11 and 12th.

July 4th

12 noon to 2pm: IIED.

See www.iied.org, and in particular the sites for the Human Settlements, Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods and Forest and Land Use and Rural-Urban programmes, all on the side bar at <http://www.iied.org/research/index.html>

July 5th

9 am to 3pm: IDS, Sussex

July 6th

A.M. Dr. Diana Mitlin, IDPM and IIED. *Financial management strategies for research based NGOs*

This session follows on from that on June 20th, and involves the study fellows presenting their own analyses of the financial management strategies and needs of their own institutions.

P.M. Dr. Aminu Mamman, IDPM, University of Manchester

See Annex B for information

D. Lewis 2001 *The Management of Nongovernmental Organizations*. London. Routledge. Chapter 4 “Culture and ambiguity: anthropological approaches to NGO management”

July 7th

A.M. Dr. Sam Hickey, IDPM, University of Manchester: *Research for advocacy: NGOs, civil society organizations and PRSP processes*

CSOs have taken a range of positions in relation to efforts to engage them in PRSP consultations. While some have remained critical onlookers, others have jumped at the chance to influence policy, while others still have initially engaged only to withdraw in protest at either the content and/or the process. CSO involvement in PRSPs has raised a range of issues concerning their relations with citizens (e.g. the effectiveness and legitimacy with which CSOs claim to represent the poor) and the state (e.g. problems of co-optation). This session will draw on case-studies from Latin American and sub-Saharan Africa to illustrate the resulting tensions, and also discuss potential ways forward

P.M. Dr. Aminu Mamman, IDPM, University of Manchester

See Annex B for information

D. Lewis 2001 *The Management of Nongovernmental Organizations*. London. Routledge. Chapter 7 “NGOs and the dynamics of internal management”

July 8th

A.M. Denise Humphreys Bebbington, IDPM, University of Manchester: *Research as a movement building activity*

This session considers the roles that research might play in helping build social movements, in particular those concerned with the environment. It approaches this topic through a more general reflection on the role of relationships, and the management of relationships, in the strategies of NGOs (indeed all development actors). From this general reflection it moves on to discuss research as an activity *for* development as opposed to separate from it. It draws in particular on the experiences of an organization/network that uses small grants to build social movements.

Readings:

www.globalgreengrants.org

D. Lewis 2001 *The Management of Nongovernmental Organizations*. London. Routledge. Chapter 6 “NGOs and the management of relationships”

P.M. *Dr. Aminu Mamman, IDPM, University of Manchester*

See Annex B for information

July 11th

AM A. Bebbington: Course summary and discussion

This session will recap on the course, identifying core themes of particular concern to the study fellows and themes of importance for the research component of this course.

July 11th PM to July 14th PM

These sessions will be used to present and discuss study fellows proposals for research, both in group and individual meetings. They will also offer time for individual fellows to interact with other members of IDPM should they wish

Course ends

Annex A

Tentative Agenda for meeting with Latin American research NGOs Overseas Development Institute 22nd June 2005

9:00 – 9:20	General Introductions of participants & their work + introduction to ODI, RAPID and the Civil Society Partnerships Programme
9:20 – 10:15	Presentation of the RAPID framework highlighting the background theories on policy processes and research leading to the development of the RAPID framework and Toolkit followed by discussion.
10:15 – 11:00	Case studies of Policy Influence. Sharing of experience of specific examples where research has influenced policy. We have some case studies (eg Animal Health in Kenya, DELIVERI, TEHIP, Coalition 2000- an anti-corruption network in Bulgaria etc).
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 – 12:00	Participants case studies. What seem to work in Latin America.
12:00 – 12:30	Our agenda: present and future
12:30 – 1:00	Simon Maxwell on managing a think tank and the 2005 + development agenda (maybe something on global networking).
1:00 – 2:00	Lunch & informal discussions
2:00 – 3:00	Influencing policy in Latin America: In groups, participants discuss each component of the RAPID framework for their context to identify constraints and opportunities. Groups report to the plenary
3:00 – 3:45	Needs assessment: what do you think you need (resources and skills) to be more successful? Brainstorm discussion in the plenary
3:45 – 4:00	Final discussion: how can we help you? Brainstorm discussion

Annex B

SESSIONS ON HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Aminu Mamman

OBJECTIVES

At the end of these three sessions, participants should gain knowledge, understanding and/or skills in the following topics:

- The concept of Leading and Managing an organization or a department
- How to articulate a vision for their organization or department
- How to anticipate and handle issues pertaining to their role in the organization
- How to attract, and motivate staff to the organization
- How to develop and inspire staff to achieve organizational objectives
- How to develop a plan of action to achieve specific objectives

SESSION SCHEDULE

July 6 - Session 1: *Leading an Organization or Department*

- What does it mean to be a Leader and Manager
- Leadership qualities and styles
- Articulating a vision
- Constraints and Issues in organization and how to handle them
- *In-class activities*

July 7 - Session 2: *Managing and Developing Staff*

- Attracting the right people
- Developing staff
- Managing Performance of staff
- *In-class activities*

July 8 - Session 3: *Planning to achieve objectives*

(This session is mainly class activities)

- Appreciating the Importance of Action Plan
- Developing an Action plan

Anexo B

Evaluación del primer componente: el curso asistencial en Manchester, 14 de junio-15 de Julio, 2005

Durante la última semana del curso se llevó a cabo una discusión entre los participantes para evaluar los diferentes componentes del curso. Específicamente se evaluaron:

1. las visitas hechas a las ONG de investigación y otras entidades afines en Inglaterra
2. el componente conceptual/contextual del curso
3. el componente temático del curso
4. el componente del curso sobre gestión organizacional
5. el congreso internacional sobre "ONG y alternativas"
6. el manejo logístico del curso

1. Las visitas a ONG de investigación y otras entidades afines en Inglaterra

Las visitas a varias ONG de investigación permitieron ver diferentes modelos institucionales – y en cierta medida fue posible ver similitudes entre los diferentes modelos institucionales encontrados y aquellos de las ONG participantes en el curso.

En general, de las visitas lo que más se notó fue:

- a. que las ONG en Inglaterra enfatizan la importancia de la comunicación mucho más que lo hacen las mesoamericanas. Invierten en la comunicación, y se forma gente especializada en el tema. En cambio en México y Centroamérica, la ONG supone que el investigador puede hacer todo, desde la investigación hasta la comunicación.
- b. que DfID pesa mucho en las ONG. Influye vía sus fondos, sus demandas cortoplazistas y sus prioridades a mediano y largo plazo. Sin embargo, es también evidente que DfID necesita a estas organizaciones.

Se preparó un esquema caracterizando a las diferentes ONG visitadas. Este esquema se encuentra en el anexo a este documento.

Hay que destacar la importancia práctica de estas visitas: permitieron conocer instituciones que pasan por procesos semejantes a aquellos de los participantes, pero que recurren a otras estrategias que las instituciones de los participantes podrían replicar. También permitieron a que los participantes pudieran ubicar posibles espacios para difundir sus investigaciones, conocer las agendas de organismos financieros y las tendencias de sus intereses

2. El componente conceptual/contextual del curso

El componente conceptual-contextual fue más cuestionado por algunos de los participantes en el curso. Mientras algunos participantes pensaron que la entrada conceptual fue un buen punto de partida, otros preguntaron si hubiera sido más fructífero empezar el curso con la presentación detallada de los casos de las diferentes ONG participantes. Para algunos, fue difícil empezar el curso con temas tan densos y que implicaban tanta lectura. Tal vez hubo demasiado teoría. Un comentario fue que la definición de ONG manejado en las sesiones y las lecturas era "muy del Norte." Quizás lo mejor hubiera sido combinar la teoría con un análisis de los casos de las organizaciones participantes. Otra sugerencia fue que hubiera sido conveniente presentar muy brevemente la visión sobre las ONGs de otro sector de académicos

Por otro lado, analizar los debates conceptuales ayudó en mostrar que las ONG participantes son parte de debates mucho más amplios. Les presentó con el desafío de cómo vincularse a estos debates, y como mantenerse al día. Fue sorprendente ver las similitudes entre los procesos que se dan entre las ONG británicos/internacionales y las ONG participantes. También fue notable las similitudes entre las mismas ONG participantes en cuanto a sus desafíos y experiencias.

3. El componente temático del curso

El trato de temas sustantivos (minería, conservación, áreas protegidas, pobreza, impactos sociales, pueblos indígenas) fue útil, aunque – dado lo poco tiempo disponible - no abarcó ciertas áreas de importancia para algunas de las ONG participantes. En términos relativos, quizás se dedicó demasiado tiempo a las sesiones sobre conservación, pobreza, pueblos indígenas y los impactos sociales de las áreas protegidas. Se apreció la sesión sobre minería - aunque no fue relevante a todos los países participantes demostró la importancia del análisis político económico de los temas que afectan la región.

Quizás hubiera sido útil tener sesiones sobre la empresa, y la globalización (ó en esta sección, o la sección conceptual-contextual).

4. El componente del curso sobre gestión organizacional

Se apreció mucho la sección sobre gestión organizacional. Los materiales fueron útiles y muy prácticos. También dieron cierta confianza a los participantes que es posible manejar los desafíos que las ONG enfrentan en cuanto al manejo del cambio organizacional, del financiamiento, y de los recursos humanos.

5. El congreso internacional sobre "ONG y alternativas"

Haber pasado por las sesiones iniciales del curso – sobre conceptos, contextos y acercamientos teóricos al tema de las ONG – ayudó considerablemente a que los participantes pudieran ubicarse en el congreso y entender los debates explícitos e implícitos que se llevaron a cabo durante la conferencia.

Llamó la atención la relativa ausencia de personas de América Latina en el congreso. Comparando el congreso con la experiencia propia de los participantes, se comentó que existe poco esfuerzo sistemático por reflexionar sobre las tendencias dentro del sector de las ONG en Centroamérica (quizás no México). Sería interesante ver como animar un proceso regional (Centro/Mesoamericano) de tal manera que pudiera complementar los procesos y debates que se han dado en el congreso de Manchester. Sería importante que tal proceso incluyera a otros actores y movimientos sociales territoriales y no solo ONG de la región.

6. El manejo logístico del curso

En general el manejo logístico del curso había sido positivo. Se valorizó la provisión de información práctica antes del curso. También se valorizó la organización de eventos sociales durante el curso y la calidad humana-social del manejo del curso. (El comentario de un participante sobre este párrafo fue que "Bueno, en estos reconocimientos (especialmente en el último) habría que ser más efusivos, pero sé que ese no es el estilo de los académicos ni de los financiadores. Lástima."